

★ **Sit Down to Rise Up: How Radical Self-Care Can Change the World**

Shelly Tygielski

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Shelly Tygielski's *Sit Down to Rise Up* shows how mindfulness builds transformative communities.

In the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic, Tygielski began combating her isolation with community. Her book on doing the same is inspired by the story of Pandemic of Love, a mutual aid organization that she started to connect people in need with help through their communities. Its work begins with a two-word secret: "Show up." It then unpacks the life-altering potential of this simple phrase.

Organized into three sections—Me, We, and Us—the book begins by addressing the self, then community building, and finally the work of developing a movement. It knows that the vision of a movement of loving communities is alluring, and cautions that such work must begin with individuals; this fuels a sense of agency and shows how mindfulness and consciousness are necessary steps toward interconnectedness.

The book's progression shows that strong communities are not possible without people who care for themselves and others, and people who both offer and ask for help; it notes that asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness. This is a vital message. Only when people embrace this way of living are transformative communities possible, Tygielski says: breaking the dividing line between a helper and the helped builds interdependence.

The writing is friendly and warm, brimming with energy, imagery, and positivity—and there's nothing fluffy about it. Indeed, this advice stands to be life-changing, as Tygielski's own story proves. From finding one's unique self-care strategies, to recognizing the people in one's sphere of influence and the abundance of "enough," the book suggests the skills and daily practices that are needed to realize its vision.

Sit Down to Rise Up empowers ordinary people to take care of themselves and their families, friends, and communities.

MELISSA WUSKE (November / December 2021)

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